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Written statement* submitted by the International Career Support Association, a non-governmental organization in special consultative status

The Secretary-General has received the following written statement which is circulated in accordance with Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31.

[01 September 2017]

* This written statement is issued, unedited, in the language(s) received from the submitting non-governmental organization(s).

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Human rights violation committed by government of the Republic of Korea (ROK) to Japanese citizens

In 2015, several historical areas have been registered as "Sites of Japan's Meiji Industrial Revolution: Iron and Steel, Shipbuilding and Coal mining" at the 39th UNESCO World Heritage session.
Upon this announcement, the ROK government began protesting against Japan. They claim that many Koreans were forcibly commandeered to work at 7 of the registered sites, including Nagasaki Shipyard and Hashima Island and that they suffered tremendously from it during WWII".
However, their accusation has no ground at all. The reason for the nomination of the "Sites of Japan's Meiji Industrial Revolution" was to honor Japan's effort to achieve the industrial revolution in 40 years, whereas it spanned 400 years in the Western Societies.
All of the historical sites were utilized from 1850s to 1910 to achieve the industrial revolution. There were no Korean workers at these sites during this period.

Photographs and documents used by the ROK government to protest Japan were identified as false information by experts, and ROK media also acknowledged the results.
Backed by the ROK government's protest, a movie was released in the Republic of Korea this summer.
It was about Hashima Island, one of the many sites registered as "Sites of Japan's Meiji Industrial Revolution" in Nagasaki and nick named as "Gunkan-jima", so called Battleship Island as the island itself shaped looks like battleship.

As the story goes, 400 Korean people were forced to work at Gunkan-jima and they were actively trying to escape the island during Japanese annexation period. It was totally a fictional movie.
No Korean miners working at Gunkan-jima were the forced laborers even after the 40 years period. They worked willingly with Japanese miners, and were often compensated more than the Japanese.

Testimonies of many Japanese people who used to work at the Gunkan-jima and old films taken at the island prove that there was no torture or discrimination as described in the movie. Why Japanese needed to torture the important work force? It does not make any sense.

If you visit the island, you will soon realize that it is a very small man-made island. There is no way the riot portrayed in the movie could have happened.

Back then, the population density at the island was much larger than that of Tokyo. If a riot would have happened at the island, mining would halted and it would have been on the news.

Moreover, many Koreans miners returned to the Korean peninsula after the WWII on ships contracted by the Japanese mining companies who hired them. One of the phrases used in the movie – "Murder all Koreans who know what happened at this mining site" – never happened.

Photographs used to promote the movie were intentionally misused just like what ROK government tried to do.

For instance, a picture of an injured Japanese miner was used to depict a tortured Korean miner. When this fact was pointed out to movie producers, they mentioned "This is a fictional movie". But when they showed the movie on the screen to UNESCO employees in Paris, they explained it as "This is the hidden truth". They are double-tongued.

The ROK government invited Koreans who worked at the mining site to the movie so they could promote the movie. Their government is promoting this fictional movie.

The ROK government has been trying to overturn the international treaty agreement between Japan and South Korea on the comfort women issue too.

But, the Japanese government has already provided about 8 million US dollars fund to the ROK government for the

comfort woman issue, it will be difficult for ROK to overturn the agreement. They needed new tactics to get more compensation from Japan.

That's why they started exploring requisitioned workers. In fact, the Korean artist who created the comfort women statue started building a new statue about commandeered workers. Then they started filing lawsuits against Japanese companies regarding the commandeered workers.

In 2016, Mitsubishi Material compensated Chinese workers and their family members for forced labor during WWII. Because of this lawsuit, Chinese people also started more lawsuits.

There were many Korean workers at various mining sites and factories across Japan during WWII, but they came from the Korean peninsula on their own will to work and earn the money which is much more than they earn in Korean peninsula.
Many of them often relocated from one place to the other if higher paid jobs were available.
"Requisitioned workers" were used to fill jobs at Japanese factories during WWII. Most of them were Japanese, but none of them filed lawsuits against the Japanese government. It was the way of living, and Korean people were also considered Japanese back then.

This shall not be the basis for claims of compensation from Japan after such a long time. Furthermore, the problems in regard to the property and claims between Japan and Korea have been settled once and for all with the "Japan-ROK Basic Relations Treaty" signed and sealed in 1965. In order to conclude this treaty, Japan and the Republic of Korea spent as long as fourteen years in negotiation.

During this long negotiation period, the issue of the comfort women had never been brought up from the ROK. If it was true that as many as 200,000 women were forcibly carted to be made "sex slaves", it is quite unnatural and odd that ROK did not make any claim for compensation for such incident during the negotiation.

The nonexistence of such claim for the compensation is the proof that there had been no such things as forcible abductions or sex slaves.
It should be noted that, during this negotiation for the Treaty, when the government of Japan proposed to provide fund for unpaid workers due to the result of the war for the individual recipients, ROK government requested to receive the lump sum amount on their behalf instead.

Therefore, the government of the ROK had been of the position that the problems were resolved and settled with the "Agreement on the Settlement of Problems Concerning Property and Claims and on Economic Co-operation between Japan and the Republic of Korea".

Interestingly, the details of this treaty with Japan were hidden to their own people until 2005.
However, the Supreme Court of Korea, as though competing against the constitutional court, showed the judgment that "the individual right to claim" is something different from "the right of diplomatic protection" relinquished with the Agreement.
This triggered the flare-up of the issue of the "requisition workers".

Now Pro-Democratic People's Republic of Korea Moon Jae-in administration came into office. They are supporting the judgment shown by the Korean Supreme Court, and are eager to stir up the public opinion utilizing the afore-mentioned movie titled "Battleship Island". It can be said that the ROK is no longer a law-abiding country.

The issue of the requisition workers is the same as that of the comfort women, that is, to spread propaganda that the Japanese people are abusing the human rights of Koreans. Also, this issue is a convenient tool to pester Japan for money, and gives Korea the goose that lays the golden eggs.

The government of the ROK brought up the issue of the comfort women again disregarding the final and irreversible resolution agreement (of December 2015). However, the government of the ROK might have judged that it would lead to nowhere since the Japanese government has already fulfilled its obligation stipulated in the agreement. Then, the government of the ROK came up with the idea of bringing up the issue of the requisition workers as a new

tool.

They spread the chained image of "Japanese Imperial Army, Comfort Women, Sex Slave" and expanded the chain to be linked to the "requisition workers" issue.
The government of the ROK is taking the stance that requisition workers were forcibly moved and the Korean laborers were inhumanely treated. With such a stance, ROK is furiously demanding the Japanese government to admit and accept the blame.

They're demanding Japan to admit the blame and establish an information center to reveal their past acts of brutality.
Prof. Munehiro Miwa of Kyushu University stated that many of the Korean laborers who once returned to Korea (their home country) in 1945, tried to come back to Japan, which shows that the story of the abusive treatment, massacre and the enslavement of the Korean laborers is fiction fabricated by the present-day Koreans.

By referring to the statistical data of the "Illegal Entry of Koreans" stored at the American National Archives, Prof. Miwa points out that nearly 10,000 Koreans tried to immigrate to Japan illegally and were sent back as of 1945. Prof. Miwa says, "If the practice of the enslavement and massacre were true, nobody can explain why so many Koreans tried to come back and immigrate to Japan illegally".

The United Nations need to intervene to protect the integrity of the Japanese people from the anti-Japan propaganda fabricated by the ROK government repeatedly who is even not capable to observe International treaties.